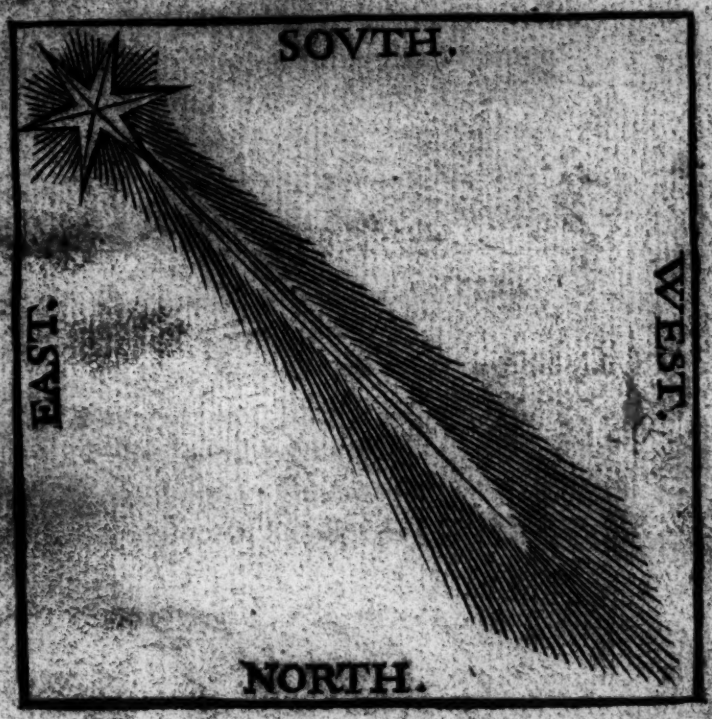
M. W. 15

# A TREATISE OF BLAZING STARRES IN Generall.

As well supernaturall as naturall: To what Countries or [illegible] they appeare in the ſpacious world.




LONDON,
Imprinted by *Bernard Alſop*, and are to be ſold by *Edward wright* at his ſhoppe neere Chriſt Church gate. 1618.

## A Prognoſtication of Blazing Starres, according to the opinion of the Poet *Pontanus*.

OF ſtirring winds, with bluſtering blaſts which blow,
Of bloody broyles, by force in fatall fight:
Of peoples pompe, the pitious ouerthrow.
Of Potentates the death, in wofull plight:
The Blazing Starres aloft like lampes of light
In th'Eſt or Weſt of azure coloured skies,
Forewarnings and ſignes when they ariſe.

If ſtill they ſtand, and offer not to change
The place, where firſt in ſight they caſt their beames,
Then ſhall inſue much miſchiefe rare and ſtrange:
As gaping wounds, and ſluzing bloody ſtreames,
In foughten field, twixt nigh adioyning Realmes.
Such ciuill ſtormes ſhall ouerrunne the land,
That ſome ſhall bath in kindreds blood their hand.

And if they take their courſe vnto the Eaſt,
A ſigne it is that forreigne foes with force
Prepare apace, to ſpoyle both moſt and leaſt:
With edge of ſword ſweet life ſtill to diuorce
From panting heart, deuoyde of all remorſe.
Thus Eaſt or Weſt in ſight, they haue their dome,
And ſignes they are of things in time to come.

## Why, and whereupon Blazing Starres haue theyr Names,

## CHAP. I.

FOrsomuch as a man furnished with all kind of knowledge and learning, should so search after the vnderstanding of great and high matters, that he haue not meanet things in contempt and disdaine, by whose benefite (as experience teacheth) the greater are attained, because they minister certain helps and aides to aspire and reach vnto them. Hereupon it followeth, that lesser things are not to bee neglected, without the which there is no passage to the greater, nor any possibilitie to pearce to the perfect proofe of them, except by the forerunning of them, preparation be made for vs to ascend. and climbe vp to the hidden knowledge of the other. Therefore, lest this our labour lent and layde out for common vtility and profite should be subiect to the biting blowes of furious enuie, and lest such as desire perfection in profession, as also certainety in deliuering Doctrine, should complaine, that wee sell shadowes for substances, phantasies for verities, and imaginations for demonstrations: we will say somewhat in the entrance of this worke, touching the name of a Comete or Blazing starre, and so passe orderly to our purpose.

A reason for vnderstanding of blazing starrs.

The starre which the Grecians call Cometa, the Latines Stella crinita, we Englishmen a Blazing starre, hath his denomination (as well by the assertion of the one, as the other from the form and figure which it beareth, at such time as it appeareth in the ayre: because this kind of starre seemeth (in our opinion and iudgement) to shoote out long strakes of fire in the Element, or bright and lightsom sparckles continued in length like

A Blazing starr is named after the forme and figure which it beareth.

vnto the hayre, which the Grecians call Coma, and thereupon Cometa, and the Latines Crinis, whereof it is named Stella crinita: so that the resemblance or representation which this Starre giueth, is the occasion that it is called a Comet, or Blazing starre, As Augustus Cæsar called that starre, which appeared at such time as he published Pageants of pleasure and shewes of Triumph, by the name of a Comete: and which Suetonius Tranquillus called Sidus crinitum, and diuers others haue semblably termed,

The names of Blazing stars.

Neyther was the Imposition of this name absurde, or against reason: for whosoeuer shall iudiciously behold those kinde of Starres, he shall perceyue, though not most perfectly, yet not very darkly) how it shooteth out long and slender lines of sparkling fire, this way and that way, insomuch, as a man would thinke and suppose the same not much vnlike vnto scattred hayre to a broome or a robbe of Byrch, to the tayle of a Peacocke, to the bearde of a man, &c. as we are taught by demonstration.

The likenes of blazing stars as somtimes they appeare.

## That Blazing Starres are sundry and diuers.

## CHAP. II.

BLazing Starres are not onely very many in number, but also diuers in appearance. The Sect of the Stoykes sayde, that they are beyond two and thirty, of whose sundry names and seuerall effects, Abienus not vnwisely hath written.

The Stoyckes opinion of Blazing stars.

Concerning their number and names, we are heere to be not curious: wherefore we will come to their colours and likenesses wherein there is not an vniformity and generall agreement, but a difference. For some blazing-Starres seeme blood redde, horrible to behold, and (as it were) crisped and curled in the Crowne or vpper part, tending towards the Skies: whereupon they are commonly called Comets. of which the Poet hath this saying:

Blazing stars differ in colour

Like as in moyst and dewie night,
When Comets red as bloud,
Appeare aloft: the spectacle,
and signe is little good.

This

This figure haue they, when they are thicke on the one side, and stretched out in length on the other side.

Some Blazing Starres there be, which haue a certayne hanging downeward at their lower part, in the likenesse of a long beard, or the mawne of a horse: which happeneth by reason of the thin matter and substance which is in the other parts, which kind of starres are called Pogonii. Blazing starres vary in figure. Trailed starres.

Other some there are, which appeare in the likenesse of a speare or Iauelin, and they are called Acontij: or such a one as testifieth Plinie, did Tiberius Cæsar, in his Consulship, penne passing and excellent Poems, or Verses of notable inuention and singular conueyance. Speare starres.

Other some there are, shorter somewhat then the former, and they be shapt towards the top like a sword, whereupon they are called Piphij, resembling in colour gold after a sort, but yet so notwithstanding, that (of all other) they are most pale, wanting beames, blazes, or strakes: hauing neuertheless a certain brightnesse in them, like the glittering of a sword. Sword starres.

Other some there are which are called Phitites, in forme and fashion like a Tunne, hauing in the hollow part of them the shew of a smoaky and smothering flame, much like vnto the Blacke-Smiths Forge, or vessels daubed and smeared with pitch, set on fire, which cast a darke and misty light, and men haue sometimes vsed for the preseruing and fresh keeping of their drinke. Tun starres.

There are besides them that we haue reckoned Comets called Certarij, because they appeare to our sight in the similitude and likenes of a Horn: Such a one was seene, when the Grecians encamped at Salamina. Horne starres.

Other some also there are, which be called Lampades, because they cast a shew of a burning torch, or flaming Lampe of which sort sundry haue beene, and that not very seldome. Lampe starres.

Furthermore, some there are which be called Hippei, because they seeme to haue about them (as it were) a Horse Mawne, going round about them in circle wise, with strange mouing and swiftenesse. Mawne starres.

To be short, some Blazing Starres are seene in the Ayre, glistering with strakes and streames like bright siluer, that it passeth the ability of mans eye to looke and behold them, where-

in (as in a cleare glasse) God is represented, in the likenesse and shape of a man. And such a one (as some do hold opinion) was that which appeared to the Wisemen in the East, and conducted them to the place where Christ was borne: concerning the appearing whereof, thus sayde he to the Hierosolomite. Wee haue seene his starre in the East, and are come to doe him worshippe.

A Blazing star representing as it were in a glasse, the Image of God.

But touching this, we purpose (peraduenture) to say somwhat in the winding vp of this worke. We know not that besides these which we haue rehearsed, there be many more formes and figures of Comets or blazing starres, and many more sorts, of which particularly to discourse, is not our meaning or entent, nor yet a matter of such weight and importance, that it should require present and perfect handling: we will therefore to that which is more necessary.

## In what part of Heauen blazing starres appeare most commonly.

## CHAP. III,

They that haue written things notable, and profitable of Astrologie, and haue discoursed things concerning the influences and gouernments of Starres, in such sort and order, that the knowledge issuing from their trauels, offereth fruit not deseruing repentance: They (I say) haue affirmed, that Blazing Starres neuer appeare in the West part of Heauen: but either vnder the North, in some one part or other, but vncertaine: howbeit, most commonly in that bright and cleare part, which is called the Milkie Circle: or else (which is seldome seene come to passe) they appeare in the South Pole, but yet without any blaze, in the seasons of Winter especially: yet it is recorded, that a Come appeared to the Aethopians, and to the Aegyptians, and that the King of those people, gaue that Blazing Starre a name, calling it Typon, because it had in it a double resemblance, namely of a round ball, and of a fire, in so much, that according to the iudgment of sense, it might not so aptly be called a Comet or Blazing Starre, as a fiery or flaming ball, or a round compassed and burning knot.

In what part of heauen Blazing stars are seene.

At

At what time of the yeare blazing ſtarres appeare, and how long they continue.

## CHAP. IIII.

ALthough Damaſcene (an Authour in my iudgement worthy reuerence) is of opinion that a Blazing ſtarre, is a ſtar newly made and created for the time preſent, which vaniſheth out of ſight, and ceaſeth to appeare, when the thing whereof it is a ſignification is accompliſhed, and come to paſſe: yet notwithſtanding, experience (whom writers name, the Miſtreſſe of many myſteries) informeth and teacheth vs, that a Blazing Starre may appeare at any ſeaſon of the yeare: but more often in ſummer and then ſpecially, when the ſtarre called Canicula ariſeth, and ruleth the weather and time of the yeare, according to the proportion of the influence, and that they continue ſeuen dayes at the leaſt, and not aboue fourteſcore at the moſt, the authoritie of Plinie, giuing countenance to this opinion.

Howbeit, this aſſertion, together with the teſtimony of Plinie may be improued by examples: For (as it is vniuerſally knowne) a Comet, which appeared before the ouerthrow of Hieruſalem, was ſeene blazing in the Element, to the wonderfull aſtoniſhment of the people, by the ſpace of a whole yeare, as Euſebius and Ioſephus verifie.

But we muſt note, that this Comet, and the appearance of the ſame, which was full of horror, is not to be aſcribed vnto Nature, but to be attributed immediatly vnto God, the Father and founder of Nature, although the ſect of the Pythagoriſts thought, that all Blazing ſtars were to be referred vnto Nature who hath prouided that their appearing ſhould be at certaine definite, and appointed times of the yeare.

The opinion of the Pythagoriſts touching Blazing ſtarres.

Touching theſe Blazing Stars alſo, of the ſame ſect there was ſome, who ſuppoſed they were perpetuall ſtars, and not temporall, and that they had an ordinary courſe to run, as other ſtarres haue their reuolution and circular motion, and that their appearing proceeded from none other cauſe, then when they were, forſaken and left of the Sun, whoſe brightnes and nereneſſe is the occaſion as they thinke, that Blazing ſtars do not appeare.

Whereof Blazing starres are engendered (according to the iudgement of Diuines) and what they are indeede.

## CHAP. V.

THe Religious Diuines, like very well of this plausible and true opinion, that Blazing starres come of no other cause, then from the holy Counsell and Prouidence of God; that there is no matter of their generation, as Philosophers imagine, but that God maketh them immediate messengers and Ministers of his will, according to the time and place, as it best pleaseth his hie and eternall Maiestie: (that by them) he might giue vs aduertisements of afterclaps, to prepare our selues onward to mete his fatherly mercy, or to suffer the bitternes of his sharpe iudgement. Whereupon they inferre this consequent, that Blazing Starrs are supernaturall, and mere woorks wonder.

Originall of Blazing stars.

To whose Sentence I agree, and most willingly assent, being thereto moued by arguments of forcible perswasion, and in number infinite. Principally, because it is a Christians duety, to ascribe more to Gods prouidence, then to the force of Nature, who God hath not onely Created, but also doth dispose and gouerne.

Yet for all that, I may not vtterly deny, that they are naturall, for so much as I am not (or at least ought not to be) ignorant, that Nature causeth blazing starres; howbeit so, that God is the Originall and principall worker of such wonders. and that their ground and causes are naturall, and not so secret and doubtfull: but that otherwhile the capacity and reason of man may conceiue and compasse them. And yet contrarywise, I stand not in denyall, that those blazing starres are supernaturall, which the most mightie Monarch of the heauens, Creator of all creatures, and Maker of all Starres and Spirits, raiseth of nothing to something, vpon a sudden, in a moment and pricke of time, to the admiration of all men, and to the reuealing of his Omnipotency.

Some Blazing starres natural, othersome supernaturall.

Expedient and necessary it is to beleeue, that with God all things are in ability, and that whatsoeuer is done eyther by day, or by night, naturally or supernaturally, it commeth to passe by his appointment, and that it pleaseth him otherwhiles to create something of something, and otherwiles againe, something of no-

All things are possible to God.

nothing. To that which neuer had matter, can he giue fashion and figure, and beautifie that with forme and comelines, which neuer had Foundation nor being. It consisteth in his might to moysten the earth with showres distilling from the cleare skies, without the meanes of lowring and dropping clouds. He can worke both wayes, to whom nothing is impossible: Now gathering the clouds together in an heape, from the vttermost corners and coasts of the world, now turning againe lightning into raine, which couering the heauens with clouds, and preparing raine for the land: For, Great is the Lord, mighty is his power, and of his wisdome there is no number or end: And therefore I am easily drawne to beleeue, that Blazing Starres may immediately appeare from God, and be supernatural, when it pleaseth God, vpon (some singular cause) to giue them beginning, matter, and substance of nothing.

Such a Blazing Starre (no doubt) was that Piller of the cloude, whereby the Lord (in olde time) most miraculously went before the Israelites his people out of the Aegyptian Soile into the Land of Promise in the day time: and that Piller of fire, which neuer left the face of Gods chosen in the night.

The piller of the cloud, and the pIller of fire were Blazing stars supernaturall.

Not vnlike to this was that Blazing starre (as I suppose) which threatning destruction to Ierusalem, was of no lesse continuance then terrour, enduring the space of a whole yeare, which is not proper to naturall Blazing stars.

The Blazing starre which appeared in Ierusalem, was supernaturall.

To conclude, as well Diuines as Philosophers and Astronomers affirme thus much in this case, that alwayes, in a maner, Blazing stars doe arise of causes naturall, albeit the Lord God is the principall author and worker of them, as in the Chapter following it is euident.

Whereof Blazing starres do engender; according to the rules of Philosophers; and the Canons of Astronomers, and what they are in deed.

## CHAP. VI.

COncerning Blazing starres I finde some disagreement betweene Philosophers and Astronomers. Anaxagoras and De-

Democritus sayde, That a Blazing starre was nothing else but a certaine bright shining in the Element procured by the coniunction of two starres: To which opinion, I my selfe of late did somewhat encline and leane.

Others also there were, which supposed a Blazing starre to be but a certaine dimme and darke light compassed, and (as it were) cloied vp in a cloud. Other some sayd, that it was a cloud purged, and purified from earthly matter and grossenesse, which receiuing light from the other Starres, casteth abroad cleare strakes of brightnesse, small and slender, like vnto hayre, or fine wrought flaxe.

Aristotle his opinion of Blazing stars, and their generation.

Others some againe, thought a Blazing starre to be but a certaine cloude, kindled and set on fire with a hote flaming clearnes whose opinion Aristotle seemeth to haue fauoured, who supposed that a Blazing starre did consist of a drye vapour, which being drawne vpward into the highest ayre, is there set on fire: and that this blazing starre taketh substance of earthly exhalations, very hote, dry, fat and clammy: which being carryed into the vpper region of the ayre, is there kindled and burneth: to whom all Philosophers (in a manner) of this our age haue subscribed, and some Astronomers also, who with Aristotle thinke no lesse, then a blazing star to be but an earthly vapour, somewhat thicke, fatt and fat in substance, like oyle or birdlime which being drawne vpward, nie to the Spheare of the fiery Element, and touching the hollownes of the Orbe or circle, is then by heat rarified, made thin and set in a flame: so that by the consent and mutuall agreement of these two sects (although some doe vary) it is concluded that a Blazing star is engendred and made of Ayre, set on fire, by reason of the nearenesse of the Element of Fire, that Ayre contayneth in the matter and stuffe of a blazing starre, and that the Ayre next adioyning, and being by the element of fire, is called a Blazing starre, and is no lesse indeed then it is named. Which representeth the colour of fire to our eyes, because the drie vapour in it is kindled, burneth, and lasteth with the light of the flame, which is moued to and fro, by the vnder ayre: where vapours of like nature, quality and substance arising, giue continuance and length thereunto, whereby it purchaseth the name, after which it is vsually called.

Vpon-

Upon this agrée our late Phylosophers, in a manner all, counting the doctrine of Aristotle, worthy credite and subscription: although as well the sect Stoicall vary therefro, affirming Blazing starres to be but ordinarie Starres, not differing from other Starres which appeare in the Ayre, and to kee aboue thirty and two in number, not as also they, which hold this for a veritie, blazing Starres to be perpetuall Starres, and to keepe a limited course or compasse, but neuer to blaze and glister in the Ayre: saue when they are left and forsaken of the Sunne, whose clearenesse dimmeth and dampeth vp their brightnesse, that it can neither appeare nor be perceiued. And they in like sort, which leane to this opinion, that blazing starres, be Starres, hauing their certaine appoynted times of appearance.

The opinion of the Stoicks touching Blazing starres,

Now, as I dissent not from the first, those I meane, whose opinion draweth neerest to reason and trueth, so I varie not altogether from them, who hold opinion that a blazing starre may bee supernaturall, and also naturall, and that the same taketh generation of a fat humour, and of fiery force, whereby it is dissolued, and at the length consumeth.

Whereupon this consequent is to be inferred, that we cannot call a Blazing Starre properly a Starre, but Catachrestically, as we may so terme them, I meane (vsing in our phrase of speech) a certaine abuse: although Augustus Cæsar (whereof we haue giuen a caueat in the beginning of this our Treatise) called that Blazing Starre, which appeared at such a time as he published his Pageants of Triumph, by the name of a Star: and which vsurped name also Suetonius applyeth to the self same thing: they both adding vnto it this word Crinitus, which we also, with no lesse abuse then they, call Blazing.

This Blazing Starre aforesayd, which appeared in the time of Augustus Cæsar, and shined so gloriously, some imagine, and suppose, to be the selfe same starre which directed the Wisemen to the place where Christ was borne. But I cannot allow of this opinion, and why I do so much mislike thereof, the reasons in the next Chapter following, do declare. In the meane season, I would not wade into wonders aboue my capacitie, lest I wander in wildernesses of doubts, but I desire rather to be wise with sobernesse.

An erronious opinion misliked and improueds

Whether the starre which conducted the Wisemen to the place where Christ was borne, were the Blazing starre, whereof the Emperour Augustus did speake, calling it by the name of a starre.

## CHAP. VII.

Christian duty admonisheth me, in few words to make mention, what maner of miraculous and strange Starre that was, which (after a rare and wonderfull fashion) lead the Wisemen vnto Christ being in his infancie. Which some men (verie rashly, and with want of aduisement) coniecture to be the Blazing starre, which appeared, and cast a great light at the same time, that Augustus Cæsar made shewes of great pompe and solemnitie, whose arising was in the North part of heauen, about the eleuenth houre of the day, and continued (as Plinie playnely testifieth) seuen dayes space full and complete.

Of which thing, although Picus Mirandula hath not godly and grauely discoursed: yet thinke I, that it is my duety, compendiously to reason, what in this point may be maintained, without hurt or preiudice. And so much the rather, because I would not seeme in this matter, to fauour the Astrologians, for so much as they swarue as farre from trueth, as the world is wide, and the heauen is high.

Concerning the Starre, I mean that which appeared at Christ his natiuity, the Euangelist, whose euidence is tryed with the touchstone of trueth, writeth in this wise. *Eidomen gar ton Astera auton en te anatole.* Among all which word of this clause, penned, by the finger of the Euangelist, the Latine interpreter turneth this word *ton Astera*, Stellam, learnedly (no doubt) and truely. The Euangelist yet againe saith thus. And, behold, the starre which they saw in the East, went before them, vntill by approching, it stood ouer the place, where the babe was.

For we haue seene his starre in the East,

By these testimonies, it is apparant and manifest, that neither Aster, nor Astron, doe signifie a Blazing-starre. Whereby the errours of Philehon and Harpocrates, are conuinced, who also deemed that the Starre which shewed and shined in the East, and was the Wisemens direction to Iudæa, was the selfsame Blazing Starre, which in the time of Augustus Cæsar (as is aforesayde,) so gloriously glistered: when it is as euident (as the Sunneshine at nooneday) how that Blazing-Starre appeared many yeares before the Natiuitie of Christ, and arose in the North part of heauen: whereas the Starre (which was the wisemens guide into Bethlehem) appeared in the East.

They appeared in contrary regions & at sundry times of great distance: ergo they were different starres.

Furthermore, what man would so soone be allured to believe that a Blazing Starre would be thought of the Wise men, a thing of such certaine and infallible Prognostication, that the arising and proceeding thereof, should embolden them to commence such tedious iourneyes, and to attempt so many weary labors: wherin they might bee of this opinion and iudgement as well, that the Blazing starre gaue foreknowledge of something else, besides the Natiuitie and byrth of the King of the Iewes.

Wherefore it is more credible, that those Wise men followed the Starre which then appeared, eyther vppon perswasion of the booke which Seth compiled: or else by the motion of Balaams prophecie: for that they were of the Kindred and affinitie of him, as some holo opinion: Or else by the ministery of Angels, or by Heauenly inspiration, or else by admonition & warning giuen in sleep, which might (why not?) giue them vnderstanding as wel of this, as it gaue them knowledge (afterwards) to auoyd the presence of Hreod, and to returne another way into their countrey, and not the same by which they came.

No man is able sufficiently to declare the erronious opinion of Iulianus, that ieceligious reuolter, who affirmeth this Starre (which he calleth by the name of Asaph, according to the opinion of the Aegyptians) of custome and wont, to appeare euery foure hundreth yeares, and that it betokeneth many things both maruellous and mortall.

Iulianus the Apostata his opinion, as repugnant to reason & veritie refuted.

But tell me (if thou canst) thou false Prophet and peruerse Apostata, if thou wilt haue thine opinion, carry away

 coun-

countenance of credite: How commeth it to passe, that those Wisemen neuer attained to the vnderstanding of that Starre, and the determinate arising of the same, at a definite and appointed time, but that they then came to the intelligence therof, when it was within the contemplation and view of their eyes? How commeth it to passe, that the appearance thereof was so far from horror and mortalitie, and that it gaue presignification of ioy, that to them was borne the King of the Iewes? And if it be effectuall to worke wonders, and to compasse strange and prodigious euents, why then did it not euery foure hundred yeares (by succession, season and degrees of times) prognosticate some semblable thing, like vnto that which was cōmunicated to the knowledge of the Wisemen? why did it not, after a thousand, fiue hundred and thirty yeares, or within the compasse and reuolution of that time, bring forth a new King to the world, or som other rare and wonderfull effect, to kindle in the hearts of men, manifest admiration? or else if it suffered an Eclipse or depriuation of that singular qualitie, and so become drye, barren, and vnfruitfull: why did it not appeare still, though weakened in working, but lost vtterly and for euer appearance in the Heauens.

A question to good purpose.

Thou swaruest therefore, and wandrest farre and wide from the sincere truth, and giuest a witnesse of thy pertinacy to all people, and of thy foule impiety towards God, in that thine owne opinion, which is mære erronious, seemeth vnto thee passing plausible: thou (in the meane season) derogating from christian Religions due reuerence, and strugling with tooth & nayle to make it contemptible. But all in vaine, thou wrestles with the waues, which in the end will ouerwhelme thee in thy wilfulnesse. For, the truth giueth in a contrary verdict against thee, with the which whosoeuer haue armed themselues to encounter successe hath not beene prosperous, because they attempted combat with a mightier then themselues, and beeing ouermatched, were carried into captiuity, and cast into confusion. This Starre therefore which the Wisemen saw, was no Comet or Blazing Star, as diuers haue dreamed, but som new star, which of purpose was appointed to expresse the prouidence of God, as in the gospell it is apparant: not being of the number & host of them, wherwith God garnished the firmamēt in the creation: but differing

The Authors judgement in the winding vp of the controuersie.

fromall

all Starres both Fixed, Wandering and Blazing, which to ben this testimonie affoordeth authoritie: For that there bee some which are of this iudgement, and holde it for a veritie: That in this starre (as in a glasse) was included the likenes of a Childe: vnto which Opinion they might (peraduenture) be induced, by the words of the Wise-men saying: Beholde, wee haue seene his starre in the East.

It could not chuse then, but be a newe Starre, and a Starre importing a myracle: For so much as neyther the selfe same, nor any like vnto it, euer appeared in the former ages, nor at any time shined in the skies for the space of a thousand fiue hundred and thirty yeares, after the Nativity of our comfortable Sauior, Being I say, a starre by the grace of God created, for the execution of his message, whose pleasure being accomplished it consumed, banished, and was no longer obiect to the eye-sight of men being causall and temporall, not naturall and continuall.

But of this Discourse sufficient is sayde, as well for the improuing of vnsauoury opinions, as also for the discouering of the infallible truth requirable in this present purpose. Now will I make a retrogradation, and returne to mine arguments, concerning Comets or Blazing starres, hauing thought my pen not vnfruitfully occupyed in this last particular.

## Whether Blazing starres proport and foreshew some strange & wonderfull thing to follow.

## CHAP. VIII.

IT is called in controuersie, whether Cometes commonly termed Blazing-starres propose any prodigious thing and woorlos wonder. Some in this behalfe seeme to bee resolued, and make their answere in this sort: That as Blazing starres are rare & seldome, so they signifie some thing that is rare and very strange, vnto which opinion they cleaue, being thereunto drawn partly by daily experience, and partly also lead by the causes from the which they set their originall. Blazing starres are signes of some strange thing to come.

And to say the plaine truth, when haue Blazing starres cast their glimmering beames, and lightned the eyes with their glistering brightnesse: but something hath followed, contrary to

common course, and farre otherwise then by vsuall and accustomed order is receyued? Why then should not Blazing starrs as they are rare, so inferre and drawe with them rare effects? And why should we otherwise thinke, then that by their generation also, some strange thing is signified: seeing that other Starres shining in the firmament, are thought not onely to haue beene created for the seruice of men: but also for the distinguishing of times and seasons, of dayes, monethes and yeares, and for other ends also, which are privy onely to Gods secret counsell: especially for that our Lord Iesus, iudged not the superstitious Pharises (notwithstanding his sore denuntiations of woes against them) altogether deserving reprehension: nor bitterly blamed the Saduces for their diligent obseruation of the Weather, & marking the face of the Firmament giuing iudgement: that if the coulles of Heauen were such and such, then semblable to bee the sorces of the seasons. As, if it were couered with red clouds in the euening, that then men should be in expectation of the next dayes bright clearenes. Which ceremony of theirs purchased in processe of time such credite and beleefe, that it grew into a common and familiar Prouerbe:

The Pharisies & Saduces not altogether condemned for their due and precise obseruation of ehe weather.

What man can say of certainety.
The Euening this doth signifie.

## CHAP. IX.

### The good and euill which Blazing starrs doe prognosticate, and betoken.

As it is receyued for an vndoubted truth, that Comets carry with them a Prognostication of some strange wonder: so on the other side, it hath beene precisely noted, and by due obseruation confirmed, that they threaten some eminent euill & mischiefe: for which consideration a Blazing starre was called, a signe of Heauen, A Token of great feare, by which name excellent men, Authors (I meane) or Writers of singular learning and iudgement haue termed it. Not that the Blazing starr is to be feared, as if it could doe harme vnto man, but because the omnipotent God, and guide of the heauenly hoast, by the same (as by a burning beacō) giueth vs warnings & watchwords

of

of afterclaps and punishments: and to assure vs, that he it is, any none besides him, that is vniuersally to be feared, not with a seruile, but with a filiall feare. Considering that he hath peremptory power ouer the whole man, body and soule, vpon which parts he consisteth: and is of ability to iudge vs to temporall chastisement for our amendment, or else to condemne vs to eternall destruction, as instruments of reprobation.

But to returne to the Prognostications of Comets or Blazing Stars, it is found by authority, that in the time of Charles the Emperour, surnamed, the Great, a Blazing Starre appeared, in the contemplation whereof, the Emperour hauing his eyes earnestly bent, and considering profoundly thereupon, at length he was rapt into a great astonishment, touching the signification of the same. And sending for a Philosopher, named *Eginard*; conferred and reasoned to and fro with him about this Starre, saying in conclusion, that the appearing thereof did threaten vnto him some miserable calamity. Which the Philosopher hearing, to the extent that the Emperour should not be more amazed then neederequired, he rehearsed the saying of the Prophet in these words: *A Signis cœlum nolite metuere*, Feare yee not the signes of Heauen, and let not the visions of the firmament strike terrors into your hearts. Which sentence the Emperour not misliking, gaue him thanks for that comfortable counsell, saying: That he remembred the duety of a Christian man to bee this, namely, to stand in feare of nothing, but onely of him, who both created vs, and also this Starre. Which notable speech of so famous an Emperour, giueth a sensible instruction, why a Blazing starre may be called a token of terrour, or a signe of horrible feare. Plinie also (many yeeres past) affirmeth a Comet to be a terrible Starre, and so inclined to destruction, that it deserued to be called mortall: as in the ciuill commotion, which was in the time of Octauius his Consulship, and also in the warres betwixt Pompeius and Cæsar, many probabilities are to be gathered, or rather, many verities to be auouched. To the words of which, Plinie, Virgill (the Prince of all Poets and Plinies Predecessor) alludeth in this wise:

A blazing starre threatneth destruction.

More flashing flames of lightnings cleare,
From clouds shine not below:

Nor

Nor Blazing stars, whose burning beames,
Some fatall fall doth shew, &c.

And the same Poet in another place, inserteth these words.

Strange starres did shine from skies in darke some night,
And flakes of fire did fill the Ayre with light:
A Blazing starre with siluered strakes did shine,
And made mens hearts for feare away to pine.

Whom the Poet Lucane imitating, and setting before him, as a president, for the obseruation of order, vseth these tearms and phrases of speech in his Poems.

Not Blazing starre with glimmering strakes of light,
And lengthned haires of colour red and white,
Which brings to men (as many make report)
Destruction dire in lamentable sort.

Whereby it is to be gathered, that those kinde of Writers were not ignorant, that a Comet or Blazing Starre, did most commonly prefignifie and foreshew some imminent mischiefe, which in trait of time came to passe, and thereupon grew in vse to be called, A terrible or fearefull starre.

## The mischiefes which Blazing starres forewarne to ensue.

## CHAP. X.

FOr so much as it is declared already, that Blazing Starres alwayes signifie nothing else, then the approaching of some pernitious and mischieuous thing, likely after to ensue: it remayneth, that this question be demaunded. What manner of euils they be, where Blazing Starres are premonstrations, and foretokens: Whereunto I make this answere: That as Blazing Starres are diuers, so are their effects and euils which they signifie not all one, but sundry and differing. And for so much as the variety or diuersitie of them is to be considered: therfore it is necessary, that the effects which follow each one, be ac-

accordingly coniectured.

Some holde opinion, that it is to be marked, which way Blazing starres shoote their light, because (say they) that part of the earth seemeth to bee threatned, towardes which the Comet casteth his beames thickest and most directly. Againe, it is to be noted, from what starre they receyue their force, and whence procéedeth their influence, what things they resemble, and represent in likenes, and in what places they appeare. The obseruation vsed of some at the appearing of Blazing stars.

Furthermore, to touch the effects of Blazing starres, experiences manifold and innumerable haue sealed this for a trueth, that sometimes they signifie barrennesse of the earth, sometimes the sickenesse of the plague and pestilence, somtimes dearth, and scarsitie of victuals, sometimes great windes and tempests, sometimes extreame heate, sometimes Earthquakes, sometimes the flowing of waters beyond their bounds and banks, to the drowning and losse of the land, sometimes seditions, insurrections, cruell commotions, tumults and battels, sometimes chaunge of Kings and Kingdoms, alterations of common wealthes, and such slaughters as seldome are séene: with many more calamities infinite and innumerable: insomuch that Lucane the Poet thought it no matter of doubt, but of assured certainety, to call a Blazing starre, such a Starre as changed the state of Empires, and wrought the alteration of principalities. His verses follow in this order. The effects which haue followed Blazing stars proued trueby experience.

Strange Starres were seene in darkesome nights,
The Heauen was on a flame:
And flakes of fire like burning brands,
Sore sights in skies did frame.
The fearefull Starre which blazeth bright,
And spreades his beames abroad,
And changeth Kingdomes in the World,
In th'ayre aboue abode.

Sundry examples and testimonies, declaring the diuers and manifold mischiefes, which haue followed the appearing of Blazing starres.

## CHAP. XL.

LEast any man should thinke this mere fabulous, and a deuy forgery, because I haue sayde thus much, and that vpon the opinion and authority of other Writers, that diuers Blazing starrs presignifie and giue a forewarning of diuers mischiefs and euils like to come, it seemeth vnto me an enterprise worth my labour, to set downe in a few words, and the selfe same agreeing with the true reports of Histories, the assertion aboue mentioned not to be imaginarious or faigned. Wherein it shall not seeme a matter depending vpon necessity, to runne through all particular examples, and to make an vniuersall repetition of testimonies from the Worlds Creation, (which passeth the capacity of my wit to comprehend, because they excede in multitude) But it shall rather be sufficient, and much more profitable, out of many to gather a fewe, and such indeede, as Authors (most worthy of credite) haue set downe in their Works and Treatizes.

A short enumeration or rehearsall of mischiefes which followed vpon the appearing of Blazing starres.

And first of all to beginne with the noblest Writers, and best approued: Who is ignorant, that after the appearance of a Comet in the time of Iulius Cæsar, not onely ciuill warres followed, in manner most lamentable, but also the death and murthering of Iulius Cæsar his owne person, which was most miserable? who being 56. yeares of age, was assalted, and set vpon in a conspiracie of 60. Princes and more, among whome were C. Cassius, Marcus, and D. Brutus, and being gored through and slasht with 23. wounds, in the Court of Pompeius despitefully perished, whereof P. Virgilius, Lucanus Plinie, Suetonius, Appianus, Plutarchus, and diuers other Writers of great authority are witnesses.

What should I linger long in the repetition of those strange tempests, of snowes, haples, inundations of waters, and other like calamities, that followed the appearing of the same Blazing

zing Starre: Which F. Horatius doth not nakedly describe, but singularly set downe with a kinde complaynt.

Who knoweth not, what an vnspeakeable desolation, and wonderful ouerthrow of Hierusalems City, followed after the appearing of a certaine Blazing Star, which was séene in the ayre, (Iosephus and Eusebius faithfully affirming no lesse) by the space of a whole yeare, burning with flames of lamentable destruction?

The selfe same miserable massacre and desolation followed shortly after this Blazing Starre, which the Lord himselfe, the Father of all mercy, and Iudge of all reuengement, did not onely foretell many yeares, ere it came to passe: but also wept for very sorrow of heart, as he was prophesying to Ierusalem, her sharpe Visitation. For our Sauiour Christ (as the Euangelists testifie) beholding the City, wept ouer her, and sounded as it were, in her eares this sorrowfull sentence: If thou haddest known (saith he) in that thy day, those things which belonged to thy peace, and now are hidden from thine eyes, &c.

Did not the death of that most godly and religious Emperour Constantine, follow and ensue the appearing of a Blazing Starre, which was séene Ann. Dom. 304. being of an vnaccustomed bignes, & of no lesse horror to behold? And did not thereupon likewise follow an exceeding dangerous insurrection in the Empire, wherein (among many murthers) the Emperor Constantius was spoyled of his life in the Castle of Helena, not farre from Spaine.

A Blazing starre appeared before the Emperour Constantine.

In the yeare 444. a Blazing starre was séene, which as it gaue prefigurations & foretokens of afterclaps, so did there ensue most miserable slaughters & calamityes, specially in France, and not long after Collen (being assalted & besieged of the Hunnes) was ransackt, spoiled, and made euen in a manet with the ground: and the most Catholicke Emperour Martian, was in a conspiracy of his owne subiects (contrary to the religious oath of alleagiaunce) murthered and made away at Constantinople.

After the appearing of a Starre, in the yeare of our Lord, 584 there followed such an inundation of waters, in euery place of the land, that it was auerred and beléeued, a second deluge or vniuersall flood, to haue béene prepared for the drowning of the whole World. After that ensued in Italie, so hote a pesti-

lence, that within the compasse of a little time, many thousands dyed in manner most lamentable. Not long after that, Rome tasted of the whippe: for the Lombards laying siege against it, made hauocke thereof out of measure. Upon the tayle of which sharpe punishment, there followed a worse: for the Sarazens rose vp with sterne lookes and bending browes, compelling the third part (almost) of the World which professed Christianity, to fall to Apostasie, and to take part with them in their damnable sect of diuelish Idolatry, and detestable vngodlinesse.

A marüellous inundation of waters, with other notable calamities forwarned by a Blazing starre.

In the yeare of our Lord eight hundred and thirteene, there was a Blazing star seene most strange and terrible, whereupon insued the death of that most Christian Emperour Carolus Magnus. The Sarazens assaulted Italy, and with violence of sword and warlike Engines, ouercame and preuayled: not without the ruine of many a beautifull building, and shedding of much bloud.

A Blazing star appeared before the death of Carolus Magnus.

In the yeare of our Lord, 1184. there appeared a Blazing starre, which did portend a manifest shew of much mischiefe and misery: for in the yeare of our Lord, 1302. next ensuing, that memorable and bloudy battell of Flanders was fought, which to the Frenchmen principally ministred occasion of many a lamentable Alas: for in that battell, the floure of the French Armie, I meane the chiefest in place and countenance, and the gemme of all their glory, went to wracke, suffering death no lesse ignominiously then tyrannically. And after that, Rodulph the Emperour, making siege against Verona, sustained great losse of his best appointed Souldiers, the Switzers, whose bloud embrued the blades of their enemies, their bodyes lying vpon the ground groueling and senseless: and the Emperour himselfe fighting against Albert D. of Austria, was slain, only Emperour elected but not crowned. Now, what manifolde miseries and mischiefes, a Blazing starre which shooteth vpward, the head hanging downeward, doth betoken, may soone be perceyued, & known by the experience of a Blazing starre, which appeared in the West, and tooke his course towards the North, which Starre was seene in the yeare of our Lord, 1363. The woes whereof this Starre gaue foreknowledge, fell vpon the Frenchmen, to their no small smart, and lamentable vnlukinesse.

Bloudy battels which followed after the appearing of a Blazing starre.

A Blazing star shooting vpwards, what afterwards ensued.

For

For in a foughten field against the Turkes, howbeit, out of the compasse of the French dominion, they were discomfited and ouerthrowne, a hundred thousand of them slaine with the sword, among which number was the Duke of Burgundy, who with the rest, lost his life without recouery.

Not long after which infortunate conflict, namely, in the yeare of our Lord, 1406. Lodouicke Duke of Clarence, and brother to the French King, was murthered at Paris most trayterously, and frandulently: the losse of whose life was death and destruction to a great number.

And (that I may grow to an end) who doth not remember, what grieuous calamities did follow the appearing of a Blazing starre, in the yeare of our Lord, a thousand foure hundred threescore and twelue, in the Moneth of January, ouer Colen Eastward, to the terrour of the Beholders, and astonishment of the bearers? There followed hereupon, in the Summer next, and immediately ensuing, a marueilous heate, engendred euery where in the earth, which was of such strength and vehemencie, that in some places, the first burst out, and cast vp with it, euen the very sand and grauell. Hereupon followed, not here and there, but euery where battels and murthers, mortall maladies, loathsome sicknesses, most noysome and infectious: yea, so horrible, that I want witte, eyther in writing to leaue them witnessed or by vtterance to make them manifest. At which time also, the right renowmed Charles Duke of Burgundie, passed many warrelike aduentures, and atchieued many a Martiall exployte, to his no small commendation, and encrease of deserued prayse, notwithstanding the successe of battel is doubtfull and dangerous.

In the yeare of our Lord, 1408. there appeared a Blazing starre, which as in sight it was wonderfull and terrible, so it betokened mischiefe no lesse innumerable, then either to heare, see, or recount is most lamentable: For not many dayes after, Luycke fell, and certayne men to the number of 40. were cruelly slaine. About that time also, (the Prussians entring battell against the King of Poland, were foyled, & slaughter, the like not heard of) made of them in the conflict. At the same time also, was the Councel at Pisa dissolued by a schisme most dãnable, the cause

Further mischiefes which haue followed after Blazing starres.

their conuocation and mating, being for the making and confirming of vnitie.

Thereabout also began the Church to be ill appayde, and to stand in hazard of hauocke: whose present assistent Sigismund the King of Hungarie shewed himselfe to be, in such sort with valiancie of spirit, that he might meritorie by challenge to be surnamed, The most Christian King. Thus farre touching the euils, yea the heapes of euils which blazing starres haue pretended obserued by experience and tryall to be true, by the euent & falling out of many misfortunes, which both long agoe, and also of late haue happened. It remaineth that we know, whether they bee not foretokens also of some good, which although many vtterly deny, yet neuertheless reade our further iudgement.

The conclusion of this Chapter.

Whether Blazing Starres, doe not as well betoken good, as ill.

## CHAP. XII.

HAuing before declared, by reasons not a few, and proued also by examples of veritie and trueth, that blazing starres (for most part) are prefignificant shewes and tokens of some mischiefe and euill: me thinkes I heare one asking me this question. Whether Blazing starres are not tokens of good, as they are signes of euill: To whom I make this resolution. First, so farre forth as blazing starres be supernaturall, there semeth in this matter to rest no doubt: because Almighty God, in the vnsearchable profunditie of his wisedome, is wont by the appearing of Stars, to giue signes to his beloued seruants (whom no doubt he hath fore elected to saluation) as well of ioyfull newes as also of heauy tidings.

Blazing stars supernaturall signes sent from God.

For, hath he not by the rising of the Rainebow in the clouds of heauen, sealed security and want of feare to the world, from being drowned, as somtimes it was in the dayes of our great Ancients? Did he not by the retrocession and backeward going of the Sunne (contrary to the order of his course) signifie vnto Ezechias, that his life shold be prolonged, and the number of his dayes were augmented? Did he not also signifie vnto all nations, that the light

The Rainbow a perpetuall assurance of Gods faithfull promise.

light was come into the World, which should shine in darkneſſe, namely, Jeſus Chriſt to bee borne for the ſaluation of all people: which thing hee would haue teſtified by the appearing of a new Orientall Starre, viſible to the eyes of the Wiſemen, and gloryouſly glittering? Euen ſo doubtleſſe, there is no cauſe, why the ſight of a Blazing Starre ſhould not breede in vs, as well hope of ſome good, as feare of ſome ill, according to the place and time, where & when it appeareth, ſince it is ſayde, Feare not the ſignes of heauen which the Gentiles feare; becauſe the lawes of the people are vaine. Why then ſhould we ſtand in feare of thoſe things, which haue not in them power, eyther to do good or harme? Againſo far forth as Blaſing Stars are natural, it is not to be doubted, but that the appearing of them may portend, and foreſhew ſome good: which is no hard or intricate matter to declare, as well by reaſon, as alſo by example.

Blazing ſtars naturall may betoken ſome good.

For inſomuch as blazing-Starres are made of fiue Planets, as Abienus affirmeth, namely, of Venus, Iupiter, Mars, Saturne, & Mercurie: and that thoſe blazing ſtarres which are made of Venus and Iupiter, are principally the beſt and luckyeſt, it cannot otherwiſe be, but that blazing ſtars, thoſe ſpecially which haue their influence from Venus and Iupiter, ſhould ſometimes betoken good, and not euermore euill. An example of good credit may that Blazing ſtar be, which when it appeared, was iudged ſo happy and fortunate to the Emperour Cæſar Auguſtus, that then it was begun to be worſhipped in the Temple of Rome, and nowhere alſo throughout the whole world: becauſe the Emperour beginning thoſe ſhewes & Pageants triumphant: was by the appearing of that ſtar ſeuen dayes continuance in the Region of heauen, put in hope and expectation afore hand, of exceeding great felicity and happineſſe to enſue: which vndoubtedly hee obtained in ſuch ſort and manner, that none in regiment was counted happier then happy Auguſtus, as none was named better then the good Traianus.

Moreouer, vpon the appearing of that ſtar, there bredde in the minds of the Commonalty an opinion of great reuerence, to wit that by the blazing ſtar was ſignified, the ſoule of Cæſar, to bee receyued to immortality, and to enioy among the Gods abundance of bleſſednes: then which ſignification, they beleeued nothing

thing more ioyfull or comfortable. So that we see both by reason and example, that their coniecture and opinion doth not alwayes deserue beleefe, which say: that blazing Starres neuer appeare, but thereafter followeth some mischiefe and ill. Touching which matter, more might be sayd to the increase of comfort, and the driuing away of despayre from the hearts of the people, then we are disposed at this time to call to memory.

## To what Countries, and to what persons blazing starres doe principally betoken ill.

## CHAP. XIII.

THe question is asked, To what Countries, and to what people specially, blazing starres threaten mischiefe. Unto which demand doubtlesse, I might think no certain answer can be made: because all blazing starres are not alike, neyther haue their generation from one and the selfe same cause: but some of them are naturall, other supernaturall, and proceeding from God in the height of the heauens.

Againe, they are without difference, so doubtfull in their significations, that Lucanus supposeth their influence to be so general, that the beholders of them, eyther on Sea or Land, cannot assure themselues of safety: and therefore they are vniuersally to bee feared.

Blazing starres are vniuersally to bee feared both on sea and land.

Unto whose opinion I willingly assent, when blazing starres (supernaturall, and proceeding from God) do appeare. For this is of a certainty, that it is Gods will, by them to betoken and threaten some yll, to all persons in generall, which hauing offended and done wickedly against the prescript of his holy Law; withdraw not themselues from that puddle of pollution and filthines, wherein they wallow: but continue a life laden and ouercharged with al manner of mischiefe: whom he of his singular compassion and clemencie, would reuoke from their sinfulnesse, by the vision and sight of blazing starres, as it were by horrible threatnings and reuokements, that by reforming their abominable liues, they might frame their conuersation acceptable in his sight, according to his vnspeakeable bountifulnesse, long suffering, and patience, who still loketh for repentance before he taketh vengeance. As may manifestly be gathered, by his dealing with the Hierosolimites,

whom

whom he admonisheth of their wickednesse, by a most horrible Blazing Starre, of a whole yeares appearing, dayly loking when they would be warned, and well appoynted with pretence, to preuent Gods sharpe punishment.

But touching naturall Blasing Stars, Phylosophers and Astronomers haue otherwise iudged, howbeit, neither they shall at any time appeare without the singular sufferance of God, or some notable cause worthy remembrance. For my selfe, thus I say, that as I am not of beleefe, that they betoken and preue in working as the Astrologians dreame: So I do not vtterly condemne such as hold it much materiall, & greatly to be regarded: toward what part of the world they shot and cast their beams, from what starr they draw their influencies and force: in what similitude and likenesse they appeare, what colour they carry, at what season of the yeare they shew, in what place, vnder what celestiall signes, and vnder what Planets aspect. For some there are, which hold this opinion (though grounded vpon no kind of reason) that a blazing starre, bearing the likenesse of a Lute, Harpe, or semblable instrument, betokeneth somewhat to Musicks and Minstrelsie, and to the followers of such vanities. So likewise when they carry this representation or that, to haue in their likenesses semblant significations.

Blazing starres nataurall appeare at Gods appointment.

Againe, other are of this iudgement, that such Blazing Starres as appeare vnder Saturne, are of a leaden colour: vnder Iupiter white: vnder Mars, red: vnder Sol, Golden: vnder Mercurie, light azur: whereupon it is thought no hard matter, to tell what they signifie in nature generally. Howbeit, to persons placed in dignity, as to Popes, Cardinals, Bishops, Emperors, Kings, Dukes and such like as are of place and countenance in the Commonwealth, they foreshew some euill: wherein as I hold it reuerence to be silent: so were it ouermuch boldnes and presumption to be medling. What therefore may be sayd in this point, let Astronomers shew their cunning.

The colour of Blazing starrs appearing vnder Planets.

How and what way Blazing starres are forewarning of somwhat to come, and of force so to doe.

## CHAP. XIV.

Although it may some diuersely and many wayes probable, that blazing-Starres foreshew somewhat to insue: yet not

withstanding it is not necessary, that we should beleeue (as the Astrologians rashly hold opinion) that they can be signes or tokens of that thing, whereof they are no cause. For a blazing star cannot be eyther the cause, or the effect of warre or death: albeit, it prognosticate and foreshew (as a signe from a naturall cause) both the one and the other.

It may be (I will not deny) the cause after a sort: as if that which is the cause of warre and pestilence, we suppose also to bee the cause of the blazing starre.

Blazing stars are after a sort the cause of warre, pestilence, &c.

As when abundance of vapours are drawne vp into the aire, which being kindled and set on fire, there followeth and ensueth the generation of a blazing starre, and infection of the aire, which breedeth plague and pestilence, moving mens minds to mutinies, through the increase and plenty of choller stirred vp in them: whereby they runne with maine force to harnesse and weapon, and so to battel and bloudshed, not feeling in them any rule of reason, restrayning them in this their rashnes. Hereupon (as it is not vnlike) spring commotions in kingdomes, and mutations of Commonwealths, then destructions: for, A realme diuided within it self, being vnable long to last, must needs come to losse.

Blazings stars foretokens of barrennesse.

Furthermore, seeing that the generation of a naturall Blazing Starre, importeth that in some place hath beene great heate and drought, (for otherwise such store of matter as is required towards the ingendring thereof, could not be drawne vp:) it is wont to come to passe, that blazing starres doe commonly threaten barrennesse to Sandie, and not to Fenny Countries.

Blazing stars foretokens of pestilence and mortalitie.

Now, because it is likewise knowne, that by force of Starres, many enuenomed and infectious vapours ascend, it seemeth credible that a blazing starre is a forewarning of a following pestilence, ingendred through the ayre, being choked and poysoned by vapours of such quality. By which meanes in like maner, drought setteth mens hearts on fire, and driueth them forward to fall at strife, brawling, battell, and bloudshed: it troubleth the brain, estrangeth the senses, and thus ariseth seditions. To conclude with the purpose, it is not greatly necessary in this declaration, to vse longer delay, since I am of this beleefe, that God (of the abundance of his loue towards vs, which is vnmeasurable) by nature, as a meane or meete instrument, causeth such and such blazing starres

to

to appeare: to the intent, that he might by them (as by premonitiments and fore warnings) put vs in mind to remember, that it is time to start from sinne, and to prepare our hearts with repentance, for preuenting of those sharp and smarting whips of Gods vengeance, which by such Blazing Starres, at Gods commandement, are threatned. For he neuer or very seldome, since the creation of the world plagued any people: but he sent among them some signe thereof, for their preparation to penitence, as in holy Scriptures it is at large declared.

Why Blazing Starres do specially betoken ill to Peeres, Potentates, Rulers of Realmes and Commonwealthes, &c.

## CHAP. XV.

IT is the opinion of some, though erronious, that blazing stars do specially betoken ill to Princes and great men, and to their Kingdomes also and Realmes threaten some mischiefe: in such wise, that it hath béene obserued and marked, that no blazing star almost hath appeared, but either death, or else some ill hath happned after, to some noble personage in the land; as by our former examples it is left verified: which made Lucan the Poet to write of them, in this wise:

A Blazing Starre in sight most strange,
The state of kingdomes, which doth change.

But it is here demanded, what the cause should be, that Blazing Starres do specially betoken ill to Emperours, Kings, and such like noble personages? I answer, that there is none other cause, as they suppose, so farre forth as Blazing Starres be naturall, then because such great estates and Péeres of Realmes, liuing more delicately and intemperately then other: are soner subiect and surprised with corrupt and empoysoned ayre: and so they carrying close within them, and secretly nourishing the cause of ill in themselues, being impatient and not able to indure the working of medicinable receipts, quickely perish and miscarrie.

Why Blazing starrs betoken ill to Peeres and Potentates: &c.

But so farre forth as Blazing-Starres are supernaturall, and as they haue their proceeding and being from the omnipotent God, it is thought this to be the cause: namely, that God is preparing a plague against them, that the blacke tents of his indignation are pitching, that the weapons of his vengeance are whetted against them, whereof he giueth forewarnings, like a most mercifull Father: to the end they might vnderstand, that the cause of this Gods iust dealing, (being sinne and wickednes,) is either in Princes themselues, or else in the people vnder their vngratious gouernment: in consideration whereof, as well prince as people might see the horrour and abhomination of their owne sinfull liues, and flye to repentance, whereunto God so fatherly would win them by forewarnings. That according to the example of that holy King, they may lift vp both hearts and hands to heauen, saying: Enough now Lord, stay thy hand. It is I that haue offended: it is I that haue done wickedly: as for these innocent sheepe, what harme haue they done? Furthermore, to whom doth a Blazing Star betoken somewhat to follow, if not to the King? For in that it signifieth somewhat to the Realme, it must extend euen to the person of the King, who hath the rule and gouernment of that Realme: because he is a King by his Kingdome, and because the wickednes of the kingdome, is reputed the wickednesse of the King, who either by his ensample giueth occasion of wickednesse: or else hauing power and authority to suppresse sinne in the people, neglecteth notwithstanding the due execution and administration of iustice: so that the saying of the Apostle is most certaine and vndoubted: that, All those whom God hath placed in authority, giuen preheminence vnto, are tyed to the necessity of this heauy reckning, not only to stand accountable to almighty God for their owne, but also for the soules of all such ouer whom they haue charge. And therefore right aptly spake that most wise and worthy King Dauid to all Kings, (and vnder their title, to all such as excell other in office & dignitie:) And now ye kings (saith he) vnderstand, be ye learned which iudge the earth, serue the Lord with feare, &c.

The wickednesse of the people is imputed to the prince.

A heauy reckoning for such as are in authoritie and office.

And thus farre touching this matter, which though it be but bluntly and and shortly deliuered, yet is it to be marked.

Of a certaine Blazing starre which appeared in the yeare, 1531. the 19. of Sept. at Mentz, a City in Germany, and was sensibly seene likewise in other places.

## CHAP. XVI.

A Question is asked, what that Blazing starre which was seene in the yeare 1531. might signifie, and to whom it is a foretoken of some euill to ensue. In answering whereunto, I would to God, I might not tell the truth so directly, as I did of an Earthquake 3. yeares past, the effects whereof, the City of Mentz, not without trembling tasted. The Blazing starre which appeared, 1531. betokens a heauie burthen of vengeance, not onely to the state temporall, but also ecclesiasticall: yea it threatneth a plague to the whole world. The fashion and likenes therof signifieth no lesse, for it was to see to, in forme of a brome, or a bundell of rods: which figure of a rod we doubt, forwarneth vs of that rod, wherof the Lord speaketh by the Prophet: I will visite their iniquities with the rod, and their sins with stripes. For Almighty God vseth for more certainety of forewarning, to giue vnto signes and tokens, the likenesses of things signified, and betokened. As for example.

At what time his will was to forewarne the Iewes of the Babylonian captiuity, he spake thus to Ieremie the Prophet: Make thee fetters and chaines, and put them about thy necke, &c. Therby to signifie their captiuity. So the same God, gaue a sign in the ayre of Titus and Vespasian, his huge hoast against Ierusalem, to lay it waste: armed men with speares and lances, running to and fro in warlike wise, which though they saw manifestly, yet ceast they not to liue as they were wont, most wickedly, the vengeance of God falling vpon them, which by those forewarnings was prophesied.

In the yeare, 1500, there was seene falling from heauen vpon mens garments, Crosses, and there appeared in sensible manner, as certaine signes what should after come to passe: namely, that bloudy battell betweene the two worthy Princes Rupert the 3. son of Philip, Palsegraue of Rhene, and Prince Elector, and the noble Prince Albert, Duke of Bauaria: the ensignes of the one hauing blacke crosses, & the other red: so that in the yeare 1504. was fulfilled that which in the yeare 1500. was foretolde

A strange sight and wonderful forewarning of a bloudie battell.

Wherefore it is to bee feared, leſt the Blazing ſtarre which was ſeene in the likeneſſe of a roode, threaten vnto vs that roode which the Prophet ſpake of, where with God is purpoſed in iuſtice to viſite the wickednesſe of the people. For if this Blazing ſtarre bee naturall, wee ſhall perceyue nothing in it, which betokeneth not ſome great euill. Firſt, becauſe it blazed ſo euen from the Weſt to the North, from whence (as witneſſeth the Prophet) all miſchiefe doth proceede, hauing neuertheleſſe an aſpect into otherquarters of the world, terrible & threatning enough.

All miſchiefe commeth from the North.

It was variable in colour, ſometimetimes pale, that is, Leaden and Saturnine, ſometimes Red and Martiall. Moreouer, in ſo much as it continued (by the auerment of Aſtronomers) vnder Saturne and Mars, Planets and Signes of vnluckie influence: it ſeemeth to betoken not onely vnto one, or two Countries, but to the whole World, famine, warre, and peſtilence: for it blazed moſt terribly into all parts of the world.

Furthermore, if the ſame Blazing ſtarre were ſupernatural, and immediate from God, contrary to the courſe and order of Nature, it might not otherwiſe be thought, but that it betokened to the world much miſery and woe: for God thereby ſignified, that his vengeance was to come vpon all wicked worldlings, and vpon all ſuch perſons, as (to their impenitence) ioyne continuance in ſinne.

Now, who hath the face to ſay againſt this, that the World hath taken ſuch a ſurfet in iniquitie, and is become ſo drunken in all abomination, that Gods mercy is changed into iudgement, & his patience into punishment, his loue into wrath, and his kindneſſe into fury: in ſuch wiſe that it may be ſuppoſed, God to ſpeake vnto vs by this Blazing ſtarre, as it were out of a cloude, in this manner: The end of all fleſh is before me. The whole earth is filled full of their iniquity, and I will ſweepe them away from the face of the earth, For they haue all played the ſtart backs, they haue walked in the by-wayes of wickednes, and are becom vnprofitable: inſomuch that there is none that doth good, no not one. Which as none can deny, ſo I thinke none dares but thus confeſſe, that the Blazing ſtar ſeene in our Horizon, betokeneth a common calamity, conſidering how iniquity doth abound in a places, and that ſinne is growne to a perfect maturity and ripeneſſe:

A ſuppoſed ſpeech of God expreſſing his wrath conceiued for iniquity.

nesse which God of his mercy giue vs grace to amend, that we fele not the heate of his consuming anger, whereof hee hath sent vs a forewarning.

Whether such euils as Blazing starres betoken, may by any meanes eyther be preuented or auoyded.

## CHAP. XVII.

IT remayneth (most puissant Emperour) the premisses considered, that your Maiesty taking the King of Niniuie for an example, rise vp from your seate of Royalty, and putting on sackcloath together with vs your people, lift vp our hands and hearts to heauen, praying to God most heartily, like humble suters.

Now who is so blunt of iudgement, and dul of vnderstanding that seeth not that the confession of offences, the repentance and contrition of heart, the humbling and submitting our selues both in soule and body vnder the mighty hand of the omnipotent God, will pacifie and allwage the fiercenesse of his fury, and so spare vs in compassion, through vnfained repentance, that wee perish not as outcasts from his fauour.

Why should we not haue this hope and confidence in God, considering that to the penitent Niniuites he did not shutte the gates of his compassion, but seeing their conuersion and forsaking of sinne, with the denyall of themselues, and all goodnes in them, he receyued them againe to mercy, from which by their sinnes they were before excluded.

God doth not exclude the penitent from the throne of grace, but receiueth them to his mercy.

Furthermore, it is not needful that we stand in feare of the celestiall Signes, because without God they haue no power at al to preuayle against any people; but being his seruants, are at his commaundement, from whom all stars and all creatures haue their office and ministery. To conceyue terror and feare therefore at the appearing of a Blazing starr, as betokening some euill like to follow, it is extreame madnesse: let vs rather tremble at his almightines, and feare the consuming flames of his iustice, who is the Creator and maker, not onely of Blazing starrs, but also of the Sunne, Moone, and Planets, yea of reasonable man.

And let vs not thinke, but that God, who framed the whole

whole world, the heauen aboue, and the earth below, is able (as he made them) so to rule them: for at his commandement are all things within the compasse of the Heauen, be they Starres, or whatsoeuer else: so that he can, according to the greatnesse of his power, which filleth all places, chaunge and dispose them, after his owne pleasure: yea the threatning tokens of his iudgement and vengeance, will be turn into forbearance and forgiuenesse, if we penitently neglect not (as did the Iewes) the time of our Visitation: For they being warned by many wonders, and among others, by a Blazing starre, of no lesse horrour then continuance: lay slugging in the Couch of security and carelesnesse, and not regarding the threats of God for sinne, either of wilfull blindnesse, or stout stubbornnesse, counted those tokens of Gods vnsufferable wrath, elementarie appatitions, and toyes merely contemptible.

It is good to be warned by the example of others.

But let vs not suffer our selues to be lulled a sléepe in the cradle of sensuality: Let vs not be drunken with the dregs of their abomination: Let not the vanities of our owne hearts so bewitch vs, that we fall into a selfe loue and liking of our owne selues, neglecting the proffered time of grace and louing kindnes left God deliuering vs euer to reprobation in his vnappeaseable displeasure, plague vs with the same rod of reuengement for our vngratiousnes, wherewith he toke vengeance vpon them for their wilfull stubbornenesse. Which that it may not come to passe, let vs in time turne to the Lord, and in due season take his fatherly admonitions, as ready meanes to lead vs to repentance and the auoyding of the scourge of destruction, wherewith he punisheth the impenitent. From the which deliuer vs O Lord God.

To the Almighty, Euerlasting, Inuisible, and onely wise God, bee All, aboue All, and in All, all Laude, Honour, Glorie, Dominion and Maiesty for euer and euer, Amen.

*FINIS.*